

Appl. No. 10/634,166
Amdt. dated Feb 20, 2006
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 28, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A method of forming an expandable tubular fabric comprising

providing an array of parallel yarns and continuously moving said yarns in a first direction along an axis through a forming device;

providing a mandrel along said axis and arranging said yarns about said mandrel during movement through said device;

providing an extruding member and arranging said extruding member about said mandrel and said yarns;

causing said extruding member to rotate about said mandrel and said yarns while extruding at least one filament;

causing said extruded filament to wrap around and adhere to said yarns while moving through said forming device, said extruded filament securing said yarn in their relative positions; and,

moving said wrapped yarns off said mandrel and setting said extruded filament.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 including drawing and heat setting yarns prior to moving said yarns through said forming device.

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Claim 3 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 providing said yarns forming said array of yarns comprise at least one of nylon, polyester, polypropylene and polyethylene.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 providing said filament comprise a thermoplastic polymer.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 including arranging said array of parallel yarns so that adjacent of said yarns are substantially in contact with each other.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 providing said extruder extrudes and wraps at least two filaments about said yarns.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 including passing said array of yarns over a plurality of stretching rolls and heat setting said yarns in said stretched condition prior to passing said yarns through said forming device.

Claim 8 (currently amended): An expandable tubular fabric comprising:
a plurality of longitudinally extending thermoplastic filaments which are drawn and heat set to have first elongation capabilities and are arranged along an ellipsoid path in juxtaposed positions forming an elongated tube;
at least one elastic thermoplastic filament having second elongation capabilities greater than said first elongation capabilities which are helically wrapped about and bonded to said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments forming helical wraps, said helically disposed elastic thermoplastic filament bonding with said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments maintaining each said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic

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filament in fixed position relative to the adjacent ~~adjacent~~ of said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments wherein;

said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments maintain their relative positions in said tubular fabric during use.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The fabric according to claim 8 wherein said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments are of a first size and said elastic thermoplastic filaments are of a second size, said second size being at least twice the size of said first size.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The fabric according to claim 8 wherein each of said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments are substantially engaged with the adjacent ~~adjacent ones~~ said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments along its length.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The fabric according to claim 8 wherein said helical wraps formed by said elastic thermoplastic filament are longitudinally spaced along the length of said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The fabric of claim 8 wherein said helically wrapped elastic thermoplastic filament has a profiled cross-section.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The fabric of claim 8 wherein said helically wrapped elastic filament has a circular cross-section.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The fabric of claim 8 wherein said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments have a circular cross-section.

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Claim 15 (previously presented): The fabric of claim 8 wherein said longitudinally extending drawn and heat set thermoplastic filaments have a profiled cross section.

Claim 16 (withdrawn): The method of forming a tubular fabric including:

heat setting a plurality of thermoplastic yarns producing drawn thermoplastic yarns;

arranging said drawn yarns in an array about a shaped path in juxtaposed positions and moving said drawn yarns in a first direction;

extruding at least one filament along a circular path about said moving array of drawn yarns causing said extruded filament to bond with said drawn yarns along a helical path;

setting said extruded filament in bonded position with said array of drawn yarns causing said extruded filament to hold said drawn yarns in relative fixed positions forming said expandable tubular fabric.

Claim 17 (withdrawn): The method of claim 16 including extruding drawing and heat setting said thermoplastic yarns as a continuous process.

Claim 18 (withdrawn): The method of claim 16 including simultaneously extruding and carrying a plurality of said extruded filaments about said moving drawn yarns and causing said extruded filaments to bond with said moving drawn yarns in spaced helical paths.

Claim 19 (withdrawn): The method of claim 16 including arranging said drawn yarns to be substantially in engagement with adjacent of said drawn yarns.